

## Message Text

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45

ACTION EA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-09 ISO-00 IO-10 OMB-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01

NIC-01 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 /090 W

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R 120800Z MAR 75

FM AMCONSUL HONG KONG

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4134

INFO AMEMBASSY DACCA

AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY TAIPEI

AMEMBASSY TOKYO

USLO PEKING

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL CALCUTTA

AMEMBASSY COLOMBO

AMEMBASSY KABUL

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMCONSUL MADRAS

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

CINCPAC HONOLULU HI

C O N F I D E N T I A L HONG KONG 2564

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR CH IN

SUBJ: PRC MEDIA CONDEMNS INDIA ON KASHMIR ISSUE

REF: A) HONG KONG 2285 (WR 10); B) HONG KONG 2290,

C) HONG KONG 2179

SUMMARY: PEKING HAS ISSUED NCNA MARCH 11 "CORRESPONDENT"

ARTICLE BLASTING INDIA'S ACTION IN KASHMIR AS ACT OF

"EXPANSIONISTS", AND REJECTING GOI EXPLANATION FOR THIS

MOVE AS DECEPTION AND "SOPHISTRY". ARTICLE COMES AFTER

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VARIOUS PRC OVERTURES TO IMPROVE SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS AND

EXTENDED PERIOD OF RELATIVELY RESTRAINED AND LOW KEY PRC MEDIA TREATMENT OF INDIA. INDIAN OBSERVERS HERE REPORT THAT LOCAL PRC CADRE UP TO EVE OF ARTICLE HAD CONTINUED WITH THEIR CONCILIATORY LINE OF CHIDING INDIANS OVER KASHMIR WHILE URGING MORE FORTHCOMING RESPONSE FROM DELHI. WHILE THESE OBSERVERS ARE NOT CLEAR WHAT GOI REACTION WILL NOW BE, THEY VIEW MARCH 11 ARTICLE AS LIKELY TO DISCOURAGE PRESENT PROSPECTS OF SINO-INDIAN RAPPROACHMENT. END SUMMARY.

1. AN NCNA "CORRESPONDENT" ARTICLE MARCH 11 CONDEMNED THE INDIAN GOVERNMENT'S "NEW STEPS OF EXPANSIONISM" IN KASHMIR. THE ARTICLE CLAIMS THE GOI ACTED IN VIOLATION OF UN RESOLUTIONS AND ITS OWN PROMISE TO ACCEPT A PLEBISCITE.

2. THE MAIN THRUST OF THE ARTICLE IS DIRECTED AGAINST INDIAN EXPANSIONISTS, WHO DISTORT HISTORY TO TURN QUESTIONS OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS INTO "INTERNAL AFFAIRS". THUS THE ARTICLE CLAIMS "THE ROBBER HAS THE CHEEK TO SAY THAT THE SPOILS BELONG TO HIM. THIS IS PURELY A GANGSTER'S LOGIC". IN THIS VIEW, THE ARTICLE HARKS BACK TO THE ANNEXATION OF SIKKIM, THE 1971 "DISMEMBERMENT OF PAKISTAN," AND THE GOI'S CONTINUING ASSISTANCE TO "NEPALESE ANTI-NATIONAL ELEMENTS". AND TO "CHINESE TIBETAN REBELS" TO SUPPORT ITS CONCLUSION THAT "IN SHORT, THE INDIAN EXPANSIONISTS WILL TAKE ANY PLACE BY FORCE WHEREEVER THEY CAN". THE ARTICLE DOES NOT PLEDGE PRC SUPPORT TO THE KASHMIRI PEOPLE OR MAKE ANY CLAIM OTHER THAN THAT THE EXPANSIONIST ACTS ARE "DOOMED TO FAILURE".

3. INDIAN OBSERVERS HERE VIEW THE APPEARANCE OF THE "CORRESPONDENT" ARTICLE AS CLEARLY UNPROMISING FOR SINO-INDIAN WARMUP PROSPECTS. INDIAN EXPRESS CORRESPONDENT B.K. TIWARI TOLD CONGENOFF THAT IN CONVERSATION WITH A HIGH RANKING PRC CADRE, NCNA DEPUTY DIRECTOR CHI'S FENG, AS LATE AS MARCH 10 THE CHINESE WERE CONTINUING THEIR CONCILIATORY STANCE OF CHIDING THE INDIANS OVER KASHMIR WHILE URGING A POSITIVE RESPONSE FROM DELHI (REF B). WHEN TIWARI ASKED ABOUT THE MARCH 3 NCNA COMMENTARY ON KASHMIR (REF B), CHI CAREFULLY NOTED THAT ARTICLE HAD SPECIFIED THAT "THE PRC PEOPLE SUPPORT KASHMIR PEOPLE IN THEIR STRUGGLE". BUT THAT IT HAD NOT SPECIFIED THE PRC GOVERNMENT IN THIS REGARD. CHI SAID IT WAS IMPORTANT TO MAKE THIS

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DISTINCTION. CHI ALSO SAID THAT VICE PREMIER CHEN HSI-LIEN'S STATEMENT AT CALCUTTA ABOUT EVENTUAL IMPROVEMENT OF SINO-INDIAN RELATIONS AND ABOUT THE INITIATIVE BEING IN INDIA'S HANDS WERE AUTHORIZED BY BOTH PARTY AND GOVERNMENT. EMPHASIZING THAT CHEN'S REMARKS SHOULD NOT BE TAKEN LIGHTLY, CHI URGED THAT POSITIVE INDIAN INITIATIVE BE UNDERTAKEN. TIWARI SAID IT WAS POSSIBLE CHI ON MARCH 10 WAS NOT AWARE OF THE UPCOMING MARCH 11 ARTICLE BUT IN ANY CASE THE TONE

OF THE ARTICLE WAS MUCH HARsher AND TOUGHER. TIWARI WONDERED IF THIS TOUGHNESS WAS THE RESULT OF ANY PAKISTANI PRESSURE UPON PEKING AND OPINED THAT IF DELHI WAS FORMING ITS POLICIES ONLY ON BASIS OF OPEN MEDIA PRONOUNCEMENTS, INDIAN REACTION WOULD LIKELY BE ADVERSE.

4. INDIAN COMMISSION FIRST SECRETARY CHANDRAN TOLD CONGENOFF THAT WHILE IT WAS SIGNIFICANT THAT MARCH 11 ARTICLE MADE NO REFERENCE TO THE PRC AND DID NOT MENTION MRS. GANDHI PERSONALLY, ITS ABUSIVE THRUST WAS CLEAR. NOTABLY THE ARTICLE HAD INCLUDED ALLEGATIONS ABOUT GOI MOVES RE NEPAL, TIBET, AND SIKKIM AND IT WAS POSSIBLE THAT THE CHINESE WERE REACTING TO RECENT TIBETAN REFUGEE DEMONSTRATIONS AGAINST THE PRC EMBASSY IN DELHI. CHANDRAN SAID HE PERSONALLY HAD THOUGHT THE MARCH 3 NCNA COMMENTARY ON KASHMIR WAS RELATIVELY MILD BUT DELHI HAD JUDGED IT AS SHARPLY CRITICAL. HE ADDED THAT NO DOUBT THE MARCH 11 ARTICLE WOULD BE FOUND EVEN MORE OBJECTIONABLE BUT WHAT DELHI'S RESPONSE WOULD BE WAS NOT CLEAR.

5. COMMENT: AS NOTED IN REF C, THE INITIALLY ENCOURAGING ATMOSPHERE OF RAPPROACHMENT MOVES SEEMS TO HAVE BECOME INCREASINGLY PERISHABLE AS PRE-LIMINARIES HAVE BEEN CLEARED AWAY AND LACK OF FORWARD MOVEMENT BECOMES MORE APPARENT. PEKING MAY BE BECOMING MORE IMPATIENT AND COULD BE SIGNALING THAT THE TIME FOR AN APPROPRIATE INDIAN RESPONSE IS RUNNING OUT.  
CROSS

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